

STATEMENT OF REP. JOHN CONYERS, JR.  
Courts, the Internet, and Intellectual Property Subcommittee  
Hearing on “The CARP Structure and Process”  
Thursday, June 13, 2002

I agree we need to reform how licensing rates for copyrighted works are set. Everyone agrees that the current system is too expensive, time-consuming, and inefficient.

At the same time, this will be at least the third time we’ve changed how the rates are set. I’m all for good government, but I feel like we’re playing Goldilocks here. The first system, the tribunal, was too bureaucratic. The second system, the panels we have now, are too unwieldy. So it seems like we have to find what’s just right and that’s what this hearing is for.

While we are discussing we should make the changes, however, it is important that any reforms made do not affect the actual rates that are set. I say this because there have been ideas – in guise of procedural reform – that really would make it harder for content owners to receive a fair price for their work.

That is something we should not do because the very incentive for the creative works that are being licensed is the financial reward promised in the copyright laws. The reforms made to the panels must be procedural in nature and no more.